

FINAL

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
October 9, 2025
6:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Riley (Chair), Susan Almy, , Erling Heistad, Barbara Hirai, Bruce James (Vice Chair), Chris Johnson, Donald Lacey

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bruce James, Ernst Oidtmann

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A. Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

3. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

4. PERMIT REVIEW: None

5. STUDY ITEMS:

A. **Proposed Gift of Land** – 22-acre property located on Stevens Rd., Lebanon, NH Tax Map 28, Lot 14

Mr. Craig Privett, Conservation Project Manager, Upper Valley Land Trust introduced himself. He is here today to follow up on the May meeting he had with Con Com, to seek a recommendation that the City Council receive the gift of land from UVLT subject to a conservation easement, similar to the one on Signal Hill. They envision that it will also be managed similarly to Signal Hill.

Ideally, they would like an assurance from the City of Lebanon that they are open to taking this gift of land, as soon as possible, subject to a conservation easement held by the Upper Valley Land Trust.

The goal for this evening is to get the endorsement from the Conservation Commission for this gift.

***Mr. Don Lacey MOVED to approve the following:
Seconded by Ms. Susan Almy***

The Lebanon Conservation Commission strongly recommends that the Lebanon City Council accept the gift of ownership of the Rutter property (22 acres located on Stevens Rd. Lebanon, NH, Tax Map 28, Lot 14) from Upper Valley Land Trust, subject to a conservation easement, to be held by Upper Valley Land Trust.

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

B. ARM Fund Grant Application Discussion for 1 Foundry Street

Mr. Chris Spaulding, Eco Environmental Solutions (a wetlands scientist and a restoration ecologist), representing LWM for their ARM project. He shared a map of the area they are proposing to restore (a total of approximately 2 acres) by removing invasive species e.g., knotweed, and replacing with other native plantings, including black willow, alders, hemlocks, pine needles, etc., thereby acidifying the soil. He has a species list he will provide Con Com. There is also substantial cleanup of concrete, brick, and other debris they propose to completely remove.

There will be 210 linear feet of river enhancement and some stream bank restoration (3,000 sq. ft.) and he anticipates substantial positive impact on expanding the riparian zone in this area.

Their work should strengthen the banks and, in all likelihood, diversify the avian population.

This will require at least a 5-year monitoring plan, which Mr. Spaulding said LWM is committing to.

LWM wants a third-party land holder. They are also looking for any funding opportunities with the easement.

Chair Riley thinks that the conservation of this area is a great idea. She shared that Con Com has a policy of not holding their own conservation easements and would work with UVLT, or the Connecticut River Conservancy, etc. as two examples, to hold easements on land that they might actually own. Also, she said that ConCom has the desire to use their Lebanon Open Space Trust Fund to help conserve land in general.

LWM has applied for funding from the State, and they are waiting to hear back. To date, they haven't received any funding from any non-profits, or other organizations.

The motivation behind this is that the owner feels this would be a more appealing area.

The Army Corp or Engineers as well as the State Fish & Wildlife have agreed this is a worthwhile project.

Chair Riley thinks it is exciting to see the potential restoration of riverbanks and other riparian areas in a neglected urban setting as opposed to the concretization of riverbanks. The specialness of this portion of the Mascoma River just south of downtown makes this a special project. She noted that general area is an important flood storage area, and she posed that this could also be an inspiration to other large landowners, such as the property just downstream from this woolen mill, e.g., the River Mill campus).

Mr. Spaulding said they would appreciate getting a letter of support from the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Hirai and others Con Com members suggested several groups that might be willing to support this project with letters of support and/or actual funding and/or work. Some cited: The Lebanon Rotary Club (String of Pearls), Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, New Hampshire Audubon (Pam Hunt), Dartmouth Outing Club, and also a local kayaking group.

Chair Riley said that if Mr. Spaulding speaks with the abutting property owner of River Mill, this would be a beautiful place for a pocket park near Black Smith St.

Mr. Goodwin said that monitoring this land is more important than the transfer of ownership. Mr. Spalding said that LWM will retain the ownership of this land, but it will have an attachment to the owner's deed and will be surveyed out for the area of the conservation easement.

***Mr. Heistad MOVED to approve supporting this project with a letter of endorsement and to also be a partner in supporting this project with funding the legal fees of the conservation easement
Seconded by Ms. Almy***

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

Chair Riley will prepare this document for LWM within the next week.

Mr. Spalding proposed a field trip with the Conservation Commission, and it was agreed they would do this. Mr. Spalding will continue to communicate and coordinate with Mr. Mark Goodwin.

Ms. Hirai and Mr. Johnson offered some positive impacts to include in the Con Com letter. Lastly, Ms. Hirai also suggested Mr. Spalding talk with the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) as a possible partner.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)

Ms. Hirai attended a Zoom session last night that focused on DMAP (Deer Management Area Program). Lynn Fisher is moving forward with working with the City to get support for Lebanon to start this program. Ms. Fisher met recently with Mr. Tim McNamara, City Council member and he in turn will be able to explain this initiative to the City Council.

B. Stewardship -Ranger

Mr. Goodwin provided an update of the work that Mr. Neil Montibello, City Ranger, is doing. He will continue to move forward with replacing 2-3 picnic tables. He blazed the east side of Farnum Hill, up to Marie's Way. He will continue lopping (e.g., Boston Lot) thereby widening trails. He will also be clearing the drainage ditches before the start of seasonal heavy rains. He would also like to get the two roofs on the kiosks completed. Mr. Goodwin also said they will be buying an electric chain saw.

Con Com discussed the fencing on Mt. Support Rd., and they were unclear if it is down or not. Chair Riley will plot this to see what fence is supposed to be removed and convey her findings.

-Trail Coordinator -Monitors and Stewards

On October 3, 2025, Ms. Hirai, and Chair Riley along with 16 volunteers from Hypertherm worked at Two Rivers to clear the trail. They also moved a tree that was across the trail, cleared and scythed autumn olive and vegetation along trails, and they also scythed Bridge Meadow.

Ms. Hirai said that they have one new volunteer interested in Stewardship or whatever is needed, possibly at either Boston Lot or Barnum Hill.

- C. Wild about Lebanon
- D. Amphibian Crossings
- E. LUCT/Current Use
- F. Other Subcommittees

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. FYIs

Ms. Hirai said that the City just recycled 2,000 lbs. (3 truckloads) of Styrofoam. Mr. Johnson said this project is announced on the City of Lebanon newsletter. Also, Chair Riley keeps updates listed on List Serve.

The recycled product is used for decks as well as frames and currently gets shipped to Canada.

Ms. Hirai will share the link about Styrofoam learning opportunities with ConCom members. She attended a lunch & learn on this topic and found it very informative.

The Tree Advisory Board along with volunteers will be planting trees on October 11th, including hackberry, dogwood, honey locusts, and a tulip tree among others. They will meet at 9:00AM at the Seminary Hill Building.

- B. Follow Up
- C. Workshops and Educational Opportunities

The Annual Conference is Saturday November 1, 2025. Mr. Ernst Oidtmann is planning to attend.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Ms. Hirai has ideas for maps on the kiosks as well as trail names and will compile information to share with Con Com at a future meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

*Mr. Heistad **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting
Seconded by Mr. Johnson*

**MOTION was approved (6-0).*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 PM by Chair Riley.

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary